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NEWS LEADER

NOV 3 1971

E - 10,519

Absolute Power To The FBI, CIA?

According to a recent article in The Christian Science Monitor, "Lewis F. Powell Jr. of Virginia, one of President Nixon's two new nominees for the Supreme Court, says he believes the threat of internal subversion is such that it may be necessary to waive prior court authorization in order to wiretap in national-security cases involving 'the radical Left'.

"Law-abiding citizens have nothing to fear," he said.

Powell gives his reasons for this position as the government's stated need for 'secrecy' and in order to protect sources of information.

Two basic questions arise as a counter to Powell's position here. Who defines the 'law abiding citizen'? Does protecting the government's 'need' to secrecy mean an even greater concentration of power in the hands of the FBI and CIA which exercise that power insulated from the 'right' of the people to question it?

If the government's inner societies is given the unchecked power to define 'law abiding citizen', what will their definition be. Given the FBI and CIA's penchant for holding dossiers on even respected senators and congressmen let alone other critics of national policy, that definition may well narrow itself to the Archie Bunker types.

The real danger here is unchecked power. Powell is stating that the government's 'need' for secrecy and protection of sources is so great that the courts looking at it may be a risk.

Our government has been set up with three branches to check each other. What is happening here by eliminating the courts, which make constitutional judgements, is a cutting off of any constitutional restraint.

Since much of the money pouring into the FBI and CIA is secret, kept even from the members of congress, the congressional checks are already cut off.